

[Trade Jargon]

VERMONT 1938-9

SLATE WORKERS TERMS, TRADE JARGON.

Boom — Derrick

Hoisters — A steel drum upon which the draw cable is attached. (usually operated by an electric or gasoline motor.

Beetle — A heavy wooden mallet about 6 or 7 inches in diameter. On both ends of the mallet there are iron rings placed about 1/2 inch below the striking surface. Those rings add weight to the tool besides preventing splits in the mallet.

Rebbage — Rubbish or waste material

Plug — An instrument used to cut blocks of slates, with or across the grain.

The box — A square steel container about [?]'x7'x2'. It is open on the top and one end and used to carry rubbish.

Billy wheel [—?] A block and tackle— similar in design to that found on chair falls.

The Bail — A large steel cylinder shaped like a pail and used to scrape out mud and water at the bottom of the quarry.

Stick — A huge wooden mast usually 75 to 225 ft. in height. To the top of this mast a cable is attached and strung over the quarry and fixed to [a?] an anchor on the opposite side.

Library of Congress

The Butt — It is that end of a quarry where the slate blocks are broken off.

Carriage — A steel device operating on the cable incline and used to hoist material out of the quarry.

The rope — The draw cable.

Jen-pole — A wooden device used as a lever in raising a mast/

King-pin — The boss.

The monkey — A high rigger

Loose pulley — A laborer doing all sorts of odd jobs in a mill or quarry.

Motion Boy — The signal man

Rock Man — A skilled worker engaged in quarrying slate.

Rebbage Man — A worker engaged in handling waste material

Dead Man — A steel shaft about 5" in diameter driven into the rock at an angle of about 30 degrees. This serves as an anchor for the cable.

Trysol — The beetle or mallet used in splitting slate crossway.

Gaffiar — The boss

Careg Daul — used for stone that is no good

Smegger — An apprentice slate maker

Climber or rigger — Person who climbs stick to make adjustments.

Library of Congress

“Over the dump” term used for all waste slate or rubbish.

Carreg dda — Welsh term used for good stone.

Slate maker — Person who splits blocks into roofing slate.